



Ticket to travel



train

mystery

supernatural

832 74 54

Chapter 1 by Jim Bradley

Although the train was already slowly pulling away from the station platform, Jack Douglas was doing his best impression of an Olympic athlete as he sprinted after it, huffing and puffing like the asthmatic twenty a day smoker that he was.

It was imperative that he caught this train otherwise he would be late for the sales meeting at Jackson and Crossmans, and that would be the last straw for his supervisor, he knew. Jack Douglas would be out of work. Again.

Reaching out with his hand, he was just about to make a try for the door handle when the door was pushed open wide from inside and he threw himself forwards, landing in a heap in the corridor.

"Wow! That was awesome!", came the voice from above him.

Looking up, he saw a vision before his eyes. Jenny Williamson stood there, her long blonde hair blowing in the breeze that had entered the train with him. He took in her piercing, blue eyes that seemed to dance and sparkle in the light.

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Puzzled, he looked at her and flustering over his words, said, "Huh? Wha.... How... How did you DO that?"

Laughing again, she motioned for him to come into the carriage and sit down.

"Let's go sit", she said, "We have a lot to discuss, Jack Douglas!"

Even more puzzled, he could only stand there staring after her for a long moment, his mind racing.

Chapter 2 by Brendan



Jenny motioned for Jack to follow her as she pulled open the door to the train car. "This way." Jenny smiled, holding the door.

Jack glanced over his shoulder as the train began to exit the station. "This is the train for Philadelphia, right?"

"Last I checked." Jenny shrugged. "Do you often jump on the wrong train?"

Jack began to dust himself off. He gathered up his briefcase, pushed his black hair off of his face, and stepped through the door. "That was actually a first."

The inside of the train car looked like it had been built in the 1800's. Thick red carpet ran between two rows of oak and steel benches, brown curtains with gold sashes hung open at each of the small windows. Along the top of the car were three lamps, each glowing with burning oil that filled the car with a thin veil of smoke.

The passengers seated in the car were dressed in long coats and heavy dresses, fancy hats and polished leather shoes. A man in the back smoked a pipe. Half the car was occupied by people dressed as if they lived in the past, and the entire scene looked like something out of a vintage photograph.

Jack didn't know what to say. He had never been the subject of such an elaborate prank. "What is this?"

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Jenny came in to the car by

to Philadelphia, silly!

"No, I get that, but all this." He gestured to the passengers. One of them looked up at him through brass spectacles. "Is this a show?"

Jenny laughed. "Not at all, these are passengers, like you and me."

"But the decor, the clothes, it's all ... are they actors?"

"No, they are passengers, traveling through time." Jenny put her hands on her hips. "Just like you, I'm guessing. So when are you traveling to?"

Chapter 3 by Sub-Reality



Jack was speechless. This must have been one elaborate joke.

"Haha, alright, uhhh...Jenny. Where are the cameras?"

Jenny cocked an eyebrow at him.

"Well, I don't believe video cameras have been invented yet, where these people are going."

She turned to a seated gentleman reading what must have been a vintage newspaper of old.

"Excuse me sir, what year is this car arriving?"

The gentleman looked up, elated to answer the question.

"Why, 1865, to celebrate the end of the Civil War!" He replied poshly.

"And yourself, Miss?"

Jenny opened her mouth to answer and then stopped and looked at Jack's perplexed face. She giggled and hooked her arm around Jack.

"WE haven't decided yet, have we, Jack?"

Jack was now very confused.

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"Um...wait. This car is going

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Jenny beamed at Jack

"Well, let's find out, shall we?"

Chapter 4 by Jaryhn



"We are the dreamers. The ones who always believed in magic, time travel, the works. You must still be a dreamer... otherwise you couldn't have jumped on this train!" Jenny said, cheerfully. Her jubilant attitude was starting to tick Jack off.

"Ok, wherever this circus show is headed... or whenever..." he snapped, "I don't want to be part of it. I'm a small town kid. I haven't had a steady job for five years, and this meeting might just guarantee my spot in the sales industry." He said, as he sank into a deep velvet chair. Jenny stood perplexed.

"Well, you must be a dreamer, otherwise-" she started.

"I even made a whole billboard. I was going to have a green facade, in a quaint downtown office... Douglas Sales and Marketing. A-And the heater would never work, and I'd have a pretty intern..." Here Jack sized up Jenny.

"You know, I could bring you an application sheet, I'd give you 30% in stock options." He blurted.

"Thanks. I already have 60% in Google, 25% in Youtube... you aren't exactly the first guy with big dreams who has offered me a job. We'll negotiate that later." She said with a smirk as she dragged Jack along the carriage. She thrust him through the gold plated double doors into the next car. Jack sighed defeatedly. This was pretty cool.

Chapter 5 by aburton



"Your old life is over Jack."

He looked at her as they walked down the aisle of the next car. This car was futuristic in nature. Glowing panels and readouts were positioned on the walls between windows. Passengers were playing holographic chess and other board games. Everything was white, pristine and clean.

"What do you mean?" Jack replied as he studied the people around him. They were dressed in something that reminded him of Japan. Their clothes looked like a high tech fabric that shimmered beneath the soft LED lights above.

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A man in his early thirties stood up and began to walk their way. His face had metal implants in several places. Jack couldn't help but stare, his mouth hanging open.

"Jenny!" The man held his arms open. "It is so good to see you." Jenny and the man embraced for a quick hug and Jenny laughed as she pulled away.

"Randal, it is good to see you too. This is my friend Jack. He is new."

Randal offered his hand to Jack in greeting. His fingertips had small metal caps and wires that looked like fiber optics ran from each one up into his sleeve.

Jack stared at it before grasping it. "Hello." Jack spoke softly.

"Well met Jack. I'll see you around the time line." He excused himself and disappeared into the car they had come from.

"We Dreamers are the protectors of time. We maintain the integrity of the river of time." Jenny explained, her tone becoming serious.

"Who do you protect it from?" Jack asked hesitantly.

"You will learn in time." Jenny chuckled softly at her own joke. "But in all seriousness, you were born with the rare ability to Dream. We are finding fewer and fewer people and this is troubling."

Jenny guided Jack to an empty seat and sat down across from him. She held his hands in her own, squeezing just a bit for emphasis.

"What you are has its benefits, but it also comes with inherent dangers. You can no longer go back to your own life. We will arrange it to look like you got a good job across the country."

She stopped, paused and looked into his eyes. "You will be given a chance to say good bye to your family. After that, your training begins."

"Training?" Jack asked skeptically. [See more of Story Wars](#)

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"Wait, I guess protectors of time are the good guys?" Jack asked.

"Well ... we're doing the right thing," Jenny said with a smile.

"Then, as good guys, shouldn't you give me the choice to join you or not?" Jack said.

Jenny clapped her hands, "Well, of course you have a choice, Jack! After all, this train is going to Philadelphia. But who wants to live an ordinary life? Who doesn't want to become a protector of time? "

"I don't, for example," Jack said grimly. He noticed an ashtray on the table, separating them, and pulled out a pack of cigarettes.

"Are you serious? Do you really think not to become of one us? " Jenny did not seem to believe her ears. Jack silently lit a cigarette.

However, Jenny was not a kind of person to be silent for too long, "OK, Jack. Our train has four cars. Two you have already seen. You will see another two soon. Then you will decide. If you don't want to become one of us, we'll put you on your station. Come on. "

After saying this, Jenny, despite Jack's protests, took his cigarette and stubbed it out in the ashtray. Then she took his hand and dragged him to the next car.

Chapter 7 by Dan Ramazan



The next car looked different as well. Jack saw a continuous corridor. There were sliding doors on the right hand, and windows on the left hand. Paired numbers were given above each door. Jenny muttered under her breath, looking at the numbers, and dragged Jack on. Finally, she stopped in front of a door with the number 7-8.

"Well, Jack, get ready to see our wise leadership," Jenny said with a sly smile. She quickly knocked on the door and opened it.

They went into the small compartment with two couches separated by a long table. The table was covered with a pile of papers. The skinny guy in a blue shirt and blue trousers, sat cross-legged on one of the couches. Constantly adjusting his round glasses, he went through the paper, and did not seem to pay attention to the treacherous guests.

"You did this. Again. Why have you even knocked, Jenny?" He asked without looking up, in a stern voice. Jack expected him to scold this annoying girl. But then the guy with glasses raised his head and smiled. Despite the stern voice, it was clear that he was glad to see Jenny.

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end of the Civil War. I'll tell Jack about the features of our work there."

Jenny hasn't had time to answer. The phone hanging on the wall near the sliding door rang deafeningly, and Oswald rushed to pick it up. Screams coming from the handset, were so loud that Jack could hear every word. Shouting voice had a strong Russian accent, "Oswald, it doesn't work! Tell Randal, this cheap imitation of terminator that his equipment doesn't work!" Oswald silently hung up and said confusedly, "Roman is raging in front of the mission."

"We've got it," Jenny said, hiding a smile. Oswald looked at her pleadingly, "Could you just...?"

"Say no more!" Jenny interrupted him, "I wanted to show Jack the first car anyway. And he will be happy to personally meet the real warrior!" Jack stared at Jenny in surprise, but she had already opened the sliding door, "I'll see you, Oswald!"

Jack awkwardly nodded at Oswald and went into the corridor after her. "Seriously, you'll be thrilled," Jenny whispered, dragging him into the last unexplored car.

Chapter 8 by Dan Ramazan



After opening the door of the next car, Jenny stopped and allowed Jack to look around. They were in the troop train. There were seats on both sides of the car. Men and women in black shirts and cargo pants barely occupied a quarter of the seats. Shelves filled with equipment hung above the seats. Nobody in the car noticed visitors. All attention was focused on the stocky figure, raging in the middle of the corridor. By loudly voice, Jack realized that this figure was Roman. He violently shook the heavy black gun in his hands, and his magnificent red mustache danced to the beat of his movements. Finally, he saw Jenny and Jack.

"Ha! Was Oswald too cowardly to come here himself?" Roman's voice didn't lowered, but his face softened significantly. "Keep practicing!" He shouted and approached them.

"Just look at this toy. There are dozens of neutralizing agents, but no live ammunition. Who does need a rifle, which can't fire?" He bellowed, showing Jenny his weapon. Jack came to the conclusion that Roman simply can't speak quietly.

"But you don't need to kill anyone in the next mission," She said, looking at the gun without much interest.

"Jenny..." Roman growled threateningly.

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"That's our Jenny," Roman chuckled, "I suppose she talked how wonderful dreams are and that everybody is nice and kind here. But she said nothing about actual life in the train. Come."

They walked to the end of the car. A couple of soldiers looked at Jack with interest, but mostly they were too busy with their equipment to pay attention to the new face. The angle of the car was closed by two shutters. Roman stopped and opened one. Jack saw an old terminal with a dim screen. There were a narrow slot and a red button under the screen.

"And here is our machine," Roman turned to Jack, "Everyone in the beginning of the journey has to get a ticket to travel. The simple part - push the button and ticket comes from the slot. The tricky part is, well, look at the screen. "

Jack looked at the screen. There was the two-column table. The list of names was given in the first column. Among those names Jack immediately noticed the familiar ones: Jenny Williamson, Randall Park, Oswald Wirth, Roman Dubov. Colorful lines of various lengths were drawn next to each name. Jack looked at Roman.

"So," He passed his huge hand over his short hair, "We all at some point leave the train. Think of it as a well-deserved retirement. Lines indicate how much you will spend here. There will be a place and time of the destination point in your ticket. We have a tradition, not to look into other protector's tickets, so I'll give you some privacy." Roman turned and started to leave.

"Stop!" Jack said, "What if I don't want to get a ticket?"

Unlike Jenny, Roman was not surprised. "And if you're in doubt, just remember what was your first thought when you got here. But, I don't think that you're really in doubt," he grinned and went to his small squad. Without turning, he shouted, "I will answer your questions when you get a ticket!"

Jack put his hands on the terminal, closed his eyes and tried to remember. "I did not make it. I died and went to heaven". Jenny read his first thought on the train. He opened his eyes and looked at the line in front of her name on the screen. "No. She's definitely not an angel. Angels are not so talkative," he thought with a smile and pressed the button.

the end

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